

## OPT/-X Self Report

ISSSO has implemented a new reporting system called Terra Dotta (insert hyperlink [Terradotta | University of Houston](#)) to manage all requests and reporting requirements during your OPT or STEM OPT period. As you transition from graduation to OPT, we strongly recommend updating your CougarNet email to a personal email address so that you will have uninterrupted access to the support and services that we provide.

## Initial Post-Completion OPT and SEVP Portal

The Student Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP) Portal is a platform that F-1 students on post completion OPT must use to report changes to their personal information (address, telephone number) and employment information.

After USCIS approves your OPT and your requested OPT start date begins, SEVP will send you an email to your email address. The email will come from [do-not-reply.sevp@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:do-not-reply.sevp@ice.dhs.gov) with instructions to create your account. Please check your spam/junk folder if you do not see the message. The link will expire in 14 days, so activate your account promptly. If it expires, contact our office and we can resend the link to access your SEVP portal.

For detailed instructions on creating your SEVP Portal account, reporting employment, or updating personal information, please review the official [SEVP Portal Student User Guide](#) available at the Study in the State Website.

## Reporting Employment Authorization Document (EAD)

Once you receive your Employment Authorization Document (EAD) card from USCIS, you are required to upload the front and back of your EAD card as one PDF file to Terra Dotta portal.

## Instruction to upload EAD Card (for both OPT and OPT-X)



102\_Uploading EAD  
card.docx

## Reporting Employment Information during Post-Completion OPT

Federal regulations require students on Post-Completion OPT to report their employment within ten (10) days of beginning employment. You are expected to report your employment in the SEVP Portal within this timeframe to maintain compliance with federal requirements.

If you are unable to report your employment in the SEVP Portal within the required 10 days, you may instead submit your employment information through the Terra Dotta Portal. This option is provided to help ensure compliance, but it should not be understood as permission to delay reporting beyond the ten-day regulatory requirement.

Students must report employment either in the SEVP Portal or in the Terra Dotta Portal, but not in both systems. Employment information reported in the SEVP Portal will periodically sync with Terra Dotta, whereas employment reported through Terra Dotta will be reviewed and submitted to SEVIS by ISSSO. Please note that failure to report employment in a timely manner may result in termination of your SEVIS record.

## Instruction to report employment through Terra Dotta (Post-Completion OPT)



103\_Updating  
Employment Inform:

### Reporting Employment Information during STEM-OPT (OPT-X)

Students on STEM OPT (OPT-X) must report all employment through the Terra Dotta portal by submitting the Form I-983 Training Plan. Unlike Post-Completion OPT, you are no longer permitted to make employment edits in the SEVP Portal. All employment updates are processed through I-983 submission and officially entered into SEVIS by the SEVIS team.

If you end a job, you are required to submit all five pages of the I-983 for that position, with the final evaluation on page 5 completed and signed by both you and your employer. If you begin new employment, you must also submit a new I-983 for that position, page 5 should remain blank.

Federal regulations require that all employment changes be reported within 10 days. Failure to submit timely and accurate I-983 updates may result in non-compliance with STEM OPT reporting requirements and could jeopardize your F-1 status.

## Instruction to report employment through Terra Dotta (OPT-X)



104\_OPT-X\_Updating  
Employment Infor:

### Submitting your STEM Validation Report (6, 12, 18, 24 months)

Federal regulations require STEM OPT students to submit reports at six-month intervals throughout the 24-month extension. Each report must be submitted within 10 days of the due date. Failure to submit a timely report is a violation of STEM OPT requirements and may jeopardize your F-1 status.

**6-Month Report:** Six months after the start date of your STEM OPT EAD. Log in to your SEVP Portal and confirm that all information is correct and up to date. After confirmation, submit your report through Terra Dotta. You do not need to upload your Form I-983.

**12-Month Report:** Twelve months after the start date of your STEM OPT EAD. Log in to your SEVP Portal and confirm that all information is correct and up to date. Then, submit your report through Terra Dotta along with your Form I-983 that includes the self-evaluation section on page 5 completed and signed by both you and your employer.

**18-Month Report:** Eighteen months after the start date of your STEM OPT EAD. Log in to your SEVP Portal and confirm that all information is correct and up to date. After confirmation, submit your report through Terra Dotta. You do not need to upload your Form I-983.

**24-Month Report / Final Evaluation:** Twenty-four months after the start date of your STEM OPT EAD, or at the time of ending employment prior to completing STEM OPT. Log in to your SEVP Portal and confirm that all information is correct and up to date. Then, submit your report through Terra Dotta

along with your Form I-983 that includes the final evaluation on page 5 completed and signed by both you and your employer.

### Instructions to submit your STEM Validation Report



105\_STEM  
Reporting.docx

### Reporting Material Change

STEM OPT students must report any significant changes or deviations from their approved training plan (Form I-983) through Terra Dotta by submitting an updated I-983. The student and employer must complete and sign an updated I-983 that reflects those changes and submit it to the ISSSO.

Some examples of material changes that require updated I-983 form are listed below.

- A change in the employer's EIN (Employer Identification Number) due to corporate restructuring or change in ownership
- Any reduction in the student's compensation that is not tied to a decrease in work hours
- A significant decrease in the number of hours worked per week, especially if it brings the total below 20 hours/week, the required minimum for STEM OPT
- A change in the training site address or supervisor
- Changes in the nature, purpose, oversight, or assessment of the student's training opportunity
- Any modification to the student's learning objectives or employer's commitments as listed in the original Form I-983
- Any change that makes the employer attestations or information on the form inaccurate

### Instruction to submit your material change.



106\_Reporting  
Material Change.do

### FAQ:

#### **1. My personal information such as address, phone number, and email are showing up incorrectly. What should I do?**

Log in to your Terra Dotta portal and select the "Contact Information Update" option to submit your request.

#### **2. I am on Post-Completion OPT and updated my employment information in the SEVP Portal. Do I also need to update it in Terra Dotta?**

No. Terra Dotta automatically pulls your employment information from SEVIS. If your employer's name does not appear right away in Terra Dotta, do not worry as the system will update it periodically.

#### **3. I received a pay raise and a promotion. Do I need to update it?**

No. You are not required to report salary increases or promotions. See 'Reporting Material Change' above for detail information.

**5. I am on STEM OPT and my personal and employer information have not changed. Do I still need to submit my validation report?**

Yes. Validation reports are required every 6, 12, 18, and 24 months, even if there are no changes to your information.

**6. I now hold a new immigration status. What should I do?**

**If you are on Initial OPT:** Update your employment end date in the SEVP Portal and upload your approval notice or proof of new status to Terra Dotta selecting 'Change of Status from F-1 to Other Categories' option so we can complete your SEVIS record.

**If you are on STEM OPT:** Complete and submit all 5 pages of your I-983 with the final evaluation on page 5 completed and signed by you and your employer and upload your approval notice or proof of new status to Terra Dotta selecting 'Change of Status from F-1 to Other Categories' option so we can complete your SEVIS record.